

# Saint Francis Xavier Parish

Pentecost Sunday

May 31, 2020



**REV. DENNIS M. DINAN, PASTOR**

**ABBY RODDEN, PARISH SECRETARY**

**HOURS: TUESDAY-FRIDAY 10:00AM-3:00PM**

**Because of social distancing measures throughout New York State, the office will not be open for walk-ins until further notice.**

**Meetings over the phone with Fr. Dennis or Abby can be arranged in advance.**

**We can be reached by mail, email or phone during office hours.**

**TELEPHONE: (845) 252-6681**

**FAX: (845) 252-6519**

**WEB ADDRESSES: [www.sfxnarrowzburg.com](http://www.sfxnarrowzburg.com) [www.ollhuntington.com](http://www.ollhuntington.com)**

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Dear Parish Family,

Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, in St. Peter's Square, the Wednesday before Pentecost 2008, highlighted how "The Church in every time ... is [in a state of Pentecost] spiritually united in the Upper Room with the Apostles and Mary to ceaselessly implore the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Driven onwards by his mighty wind she will thus be able to proclaim the Gospel to the very ends of the earth. This is why even in the face of difficulties and divisions, Christians cannot be resigned nor yield to discouragement." Such was his General Audience.<sup>1</sup>

What we do as a Church, must be done at the individual level. Therefore, the Pope added, "The Lord asks this of us: to persevere in prayer in order to keep alive the flame of faith, love and hope which nourishes the desire for full unity". We received these gifts (theological virtues) at our Baptism. For many of us, how long have these remained dormant, un-watered, un-nurtured, inhibited from growing? We have the means at hand, but we are not always that serious about going after what has been promised to those who do as Christ asks. Jesus explained, "*Let anyone who thirsts come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as scripture says: 'Rivers of living water will flow from within him.'*" He said this in reference to the Spirit that those who came to believe in him were to receive" (John 7:37-39).

Saint Cyril of Jerusalem takes these words of Jesus and gives us the meaning behind calling the Spirit "water," showing an instantly recognizable similarity for us to glimpse. He says,

Because all things are dependent on water, plants and animals have their origin in water. Water comes down from heaven as rain, and although it is always the same in itself, it produces many different effects, one in the palm tree, another in the vine, and so on throughout the whole of creation. It does not come down, now as one thing, now as another, but while remaining essentially the same, it adapts itself to the needs of every creature that receives it.

Obviously, this includes us too, but only physically. If we stop there, however, we miss the point. Jesus is talking to us about the spiritual—the supernatural—the Spirit. The Holy Spirit transcends our human nature. This is so that we rise above and go beyond our human nature; especially that it is a fallen one. Thomas Merton in his book, *Seeds of Contemplation*, in the chapter "Things in their Identity," asks, "But what about you? What about me?" He answers,

Unlike the animals and the trees, it is not enough for us to be what our nature intends. It is not enough for us to be individual persons. For us, holiness is more than humanity. If we are never anything but persons, never anything but our natural selves, we will not be saints and we will not be able to offer to God the worship of our imitation, which is sanctity.

It is true to say that for me sanctity consists in being myself and for you sanctity consists in being *your* self and that, in the last analysis, your sanctity will never be mine and mine will never be yours, except in the communion of charity and grace.

For me to be a saint means to be myself. Therefore

the problem of sanctity and salvation is in fact the problem of finding out who I am and of discovering my true self.

Trees and animals have no problem. God makes them what they are without consulting them, and they are perfectly satisfied.

With us it is different. God leaves us free to be whatever we like. We can be ourselves or not, as we please. But the problem is this: *since God alone possesses the secret of my identity, He alone can make me who I am* or rather, He alone can make me who I will be when I at last fully begin to be.

*The seeds that are planted in my liberty at every moment, by God's will, are the seeds of my own identity, my own reality, my own happiness, my own sanctity.*

To refuse them is to refuse everything: it is the refusal of my own existence and being: of my identity, my very self.

Saint Basil the Great tells us, "To the Spirit all creatures turn in their need for sanctification; all living things seek him according to their ability. His breath empowers each to achieve its own natural end." We must agree. How else can the necessary transformation take place to raise us up? Are we convinced, as Pope Benedict was, that we need new and continual outpourings of the gifts of the Holy Spirit? Unless we are convinced, how will we understand the necessity of this persevering prayer the Lord is asking of us? How will we be persistent in appealing to obtain what we need? How will we move forward if we do not live accepting the fact that, "The Spirit is the source of holiness, a spiritual light, and he offers his own light to every mind to help it in its search for truth. By nature the Spirit is beyond the reach of our mind, but we can know him by his goodness," as Saint Basil teaches.

In his audience, the Holy Father quoted the *Letter of Saint Paul to the Galatians* where it is written, "*The fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.*" And, he concluded, "These are the gifts of the Holy Spirit that we also implore today for all Christians...." Are the fruits of the Spirit present in our lives? I had read in a letter from Archbishop Fénelon's *Let Go*, how he told some soul, striving through a difficult period of aridity, "Do not be surprised at again finding yourself becoming sensitive, impatient, haughty, and self-willed. You must realize that this is your natural disposition, and without God's grace, you will never be anything different." Then he quotes Saint Augustine, "We must bear the yoke of the daily confusion of our sins." More importantly, he adds to this instruction, "we must be made to feel our weakness, our wretchedness, our inability to correct ourselves. We must give up our hope in ourselves, and have no hope but in God." He says that we must recognize that we are a people who "are waiting for God to change us." If we are not praying incessantly for the Spirit to change us, we should be praying for God to reveal to us our real spiritual condition. If we do not recognize it in this life, we will certainly in the next. Merton exclaims,

Not to accept and love and do God's will is to refuse the fullness of my existence.

And if I never become what I am meant to be, but always remain what I am not, I shall spend eternity contradicting myself by being at once something and nothing, a life that wants to live and is dead, and a death that wants to be dead and cannot quite achieve its own death because it still has to exist.

Remember, Saint Paul insisted, *"those who are in the flesh cannot please God. But [hopefully] you are not in the flesh; on the contrary, [hopefully] you are in the spirit, if only the Spirit of God dwells in you. Whoever does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him"* (Rom 8:8-9). Therefore, we must live so as to die belonging to Him! Once again, Thomas Merton, in Chapter 25, "Inward Destitution," describes the resultant failure to do so,

Measure the sorrow, if you can, measure the sorrow of realizing that you have a nature destined by God for the gift of an existence, an activity, a beatitude which utterly transcend[s] everything that you are and can ever be; of finding yourself left with nothing but yourself; of finding yourself without the gift which is the only meaning of your existence. Then the highest perfection of natural life, of human understanding, the purest and finest tension of the human will reaching out in desire for everything that is perfect, appears to you as something essentially vulgar and worthless. Even without your mistakes and your sins, everything that you are or can be or have or can possess appears to you as if it were nothing, because it has no value, no power to procure for you the immense gift which is utterly beyond you and which is the only real reason why you were created.

But when, on top of all that, you see that your nature is still twisted and disfigured by selfishness and by the disorder of sin, and that you are cramped and warped by a way of living that turns you incessantly back upon your own pleasure and your own interest, and that you cannot escape this distortion: that you cannot even deserve to escape it, by your own power, what will your sorrow be? This is the root of what the saints called compunction: the grief, the anguish of being helpless to be anything but what you were not meant to be.

Still, here on earth, do we realize, Merton says, "All sorrow, hardship, difficulty, struggle, pain, unhappiness, and ultimately death itself can be traced to rebellion against God's love for us"?

Is this what any us really want? There is a well-known story that many of us have used in a homily about three devils who were selected to tempt and ruin people on earth. They were asked of their method. The first one said, "I will tell them that there is no God." However, Satan the chief of the devils said, "That won't do, for the people know that there is God." The second devil said, "I will proclaim that there is no hell." "This too is an old and useless trick for people know there is hell as a punishment for sin." Then the third one said, "I will convince them that there is plenty of time. So don't hurry, don't worry!"

Isn't that where we find ourselves many times? In this age of "self," why do we have so much trouble letting

God make us into our real selves—the person we were created to be? Merton cries out about this,

There is no substance under the things I have gathered together about me. I am hollow, and my structure of pleasures and ambitions has no foundation. I am objectified in them. But they are all destined by their very contingency to be destroyed. And when they are gone there will be nothing left of me but my own nakedness and emptiness and hollowness, to tell me that I am a mistake.

The secret of my identity is hidden in the love and mercy of God.

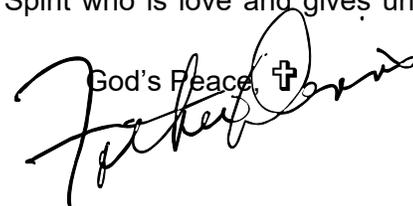
But whatever is in God is really identical with Him: for His infinite simplicity admits no division and no distinction. Therefore I cannot hope to find myself anywhere except in Him.

One of the gifts that the Holy Spirit wishes to pour out continually upon us is Fear of the Lord. This does not mean that God wants us to fear him. No! He wants us to have the same response as when we disappoint those who love us here on earth. He wants to draw us to himself. Rather than see this as fearful, we should see it in all of its beauty. And, we must understand, this is the work of the Holy Spirit. He is the *"living water."* Like water, always the same, the Spirit acts differently in different people. Saint Cyril gives us a hint of what any of us can expect:

The Spirit comes gently and makes himself known by his fragrance. He is not felt as a burden, for he is light, very light. Rays of light and knowledge stream before him as he approaches. The Spirit comes with the tenderness of a true friend and protector to save, to heal, to teach, to counsel, to strengthen, to console. The Spirit comes to enlighten the mind first of the one who receives him, and then, through him, the minds of others as well:

As light strikes the eyes of a man who comes out of darkness into the sunshine and enables him to see clearly things he could not discern before, so light floods the soul of the man counted worthy of receiving the Holy Spirit and enables him to see things beyond the range of human vision, things hitherto undreamed of.

This is within the reach of all of us—every man, woman and child—confirmed by Pope Benedict's own words: The Holy Spirit is "a power for the forgiveness of sins, for renewing our hearts and our lives; and thus he renews the earth and creates unity where there was division". When it descended upon the Apostles they spoke in tongues, a sign that "the Babylonian dispersion, the result of pride that separates men and women, had been overcome in the Spirit who is love and gives unity in diversity".

God's Peace. ✝  


SFX Weekly Sunday Collection

Our weekly collection for those attending Saint Francis Xavier Church is used for the day-to-day operation of the parish and its programs. You may set up a one-time or recurring donation to our parish.



Make a Donation

OLL Weekly Sunday Collection

Our weekly collection for those attending Our Lady of the Lake Church

Make a Donation

Repair & Maintenance

The Repair & Maintenance Collection is always the 2nd collection on the 1st Sunday of each month.



Make a Donation

Monthly Archdiocesan (Please Specify)

Archdiocesan Collection is always the 2nd collection on the 2nd Sunday of each month.

Make a Donation

Capital Improvements

The Capital Improvements Collection is always the 2nd collection on the 3rd Sunday of each month.



Make a Donation

Mass Intentions

The usual offerings for Mass Intentions called in or arranged with our Parish Office. These are generally \$15 for Masses in the archdiocese of New York.

Make a Donation

Mothers Day Novena

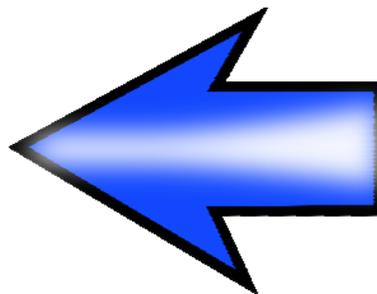
Usual free-will offering for Masses that will be said in the Month of May for our Mothers, living and deceased.



Fathers Day Novena

Usual free-will offering for Masses during the Month of June that will be said for our Fathers, living and deceased.

WeShare



We Share is now up and running so that you can make contributions to the church here at any time for the collections you've done in the past.

There are donation buttons for each weekend collection, Archdiocesan special collections, Mother's Day Intentions, and the Cardinal's Appeal, and more.

Fr. Dennis will be saying Mass for your Mother's Day intentions next weekend and throughout the month of May at available Masses. Please send them in via mail, email, or call the office.

To donate, please go to:

<https://sfxnarrowsburg.weshareonline.org/>

*We realize these are difficult times for many, and we would like to thank those that are still able to support the church.*



Saint Francis Xavier Parish, Narrowsburg, NY

With all public gatherings cancelled, I think you will agree how difficult it is, among other things, not to gather each weekend for Sunday Mass. Though we cannot gather in person, we are united with Christ in prayer. Know I am praying for you and your families.

In the meantime, as we face this health crisis together, I need to ask you for your continued, generous financial support for our parish. I encourage you to set up a recurring donation using our online giving platform as your donations are still needed. Will you make the commitment to support your parish during this unprecedented time through online giving today?

May God Protect and Bless You All, God's Peace +

If you have already signed up to give a recurring gift online, thank you. If not, please sign up today. Your participation in supporting your parish is still needed!

- 1 Visit [www.sfxnarrowsburg.com](http://www.sfxnarrowsburg.com) and click **Give Online**.
- 2 Select the collection of your choice.
- 3 Set up your donation amount, payment type, and frequency.

Once your account information is added, donations will automatically deduct from your account. It's that easy!

Please contact our office with questions at 845-252-6681.

# Mass Intentions

*Masses are NOT public at this time.*

## Saturday, May 30<sup>th</sup>

SFX 4:30pm - Eileen Falk

## Sunday, May 31<sup>st</sup>

SFX 8:30am - Our Parish Family

SFX 11:00am - Our Parish Family

## Monday, June 1<sup>st</sup>

NO MASS

## Tuesday, June 2<sup>nd</sup>

SFX 8:30am - Todd Panich

Requested by George Walter

## Wednesday, June 3<sup>rd</sup>

SFX 8:30am - Linda McCarthy

## Thursday, June 4<sup>th</sup>

SFX 8:30am - Available or Our Parish Family

## Friday, June 5<sup>th</sup>

SFX 8:30am - Kaylene Kramer

Requested by Abby Rodden

## Saturday, June 6<sup>th</sup>

SFX 4:30pm - Available or Our Parish Family

## Sunday, June 7<sup>th</sup>

SFX 8:30am - Available or Our Parish Family

SFX 11:00am - Available or Our Parish Family

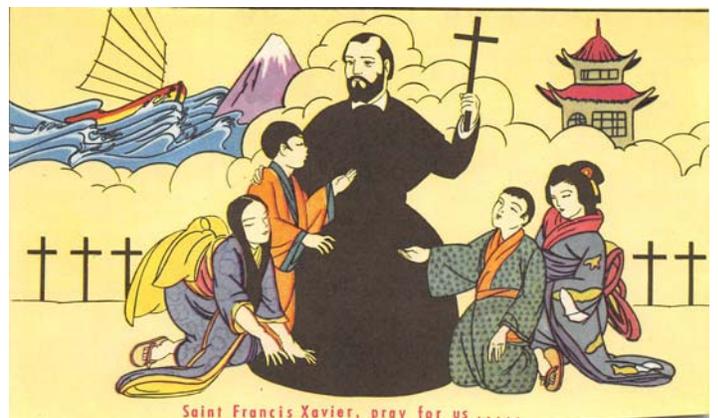
*Fr. Dennis will be saying Mass daily. Please mail, email, or call the office to request your*



**Please go to the following link and sign up for Flocknote! (Please use a cell number)**

**Flocknote allows parishioners to stay in touch and learn about important updates regarding the ongoing cancellations.**

**<https://signup.flocknote.com/>**



## READINGS



**Acts 2:1-11**

**1 Corinthians 12:3b-7, 12-13**

**John 20:19-23**

## Please Pray for our Parish Family

**For the Sick:** David Meyer, Ed Coates, Ella Dorothy Neidert, Dolly Marinelli, Elizabeth Stoddard

**For the Deceased:** Dorothy Schlegel, Peggy Lee Romano, Carmen T. Holstrom, Joseph Ramon Gonzalez, Andrew Kimmel, Grace Kimmel, Madeline LoBasso, Margaret Corkett, Joseph Barca, Emerson "Bucky" Misner, Maria Frangipane

**For those Serving in the Military:** Justin Warnick

**Faith Forward  
Returning to Public Worship  
Executive Summary**

The Archdiocese of New York is a large, diverse community of 2.81 million Catholics. We serve the city in Manhattan, Staten Island and the Bronx, plus Dutchess, Orange, Sullivan, Westchester, Ulster, Rockland and Putnam counties. Since our founding in 1808, our mission has been to live and proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ, aware of the local area and the world, the spiritual and the material, the present and the future. We do this through ministry, service, prayer, education, and community, working with pastors, deacons, religious men and women, catechists, teachers, parish staff and volunteers at our nearly 300 parishes.

The lifeblood of the archdiocese's mission stems from the Mass and the sacraments. It is here that our people are inspired to serve their brothers and sisters in the broader community, and are sent forth to engage in evangelization and charitable works.

Since the outset of the COVID-19 crisis in the New York region, our churches have been closed to public worship. This was, indeed, a sad but necessary step to take for the health and safety of our parishioners and local communities. And it has worked.

Healthcare and government officials have now announced a phased plan to begin to reopen. To date, the "NY Forward" plan does not outline a process by which houses of worship will reopen their doors.

The Catholic community in New York is eager to resume public worship in a safe and responsible manner and in coordination with state and local government and health officials. Our people believe that worship is an essential service. To that end, we are proposing a phased plan which follows the latest guidance from the CDC and which, at the same time, respects our traditions. We believe that public worship can continue to take place safely in an era of social distancing.

Our plan includes the following policies and procedures:

- Churches will be regularly sanitized and disinfected. Signage will be placed on entrance doors instructing anyone with fever or flu-like symptoms not to enter the church. Parishioners must wear masks.

- Attendance at each individual Mass will be limited to no more than 25 percent of a church's occupancy permit.
- No physical contact during the Sign of Peace will be permitted.
- Parish safety committees and ushers will be trained to receive parishioners and escort them to suitable seating arrangements set up for social distancing for the protection of priests and parishioners. Ushers will wear masks and not make physical contact when greeting parishioners. Orderly arrivals and departures will be coordinated by ushers and parish security teams.
- Pews will be prepared to safeguard parishioners and will follow published protocols (see enclosed sample seating arrangements) based on:
  - Singles
  - Couples
  - Families with one child
  - Families with more than one child
- Frequently touched surfaces in the church (pews/pew tops, door handles, microphones, etc.) will be cleaned and sanitized per CDC recommendations after every liturgy. Restrooms will be cleaned between Masses.
- Hand sanitizer dispensaries will be available at all church entrances.
- At arrival and departure times, entrance doors will be propped open to limit contact with door handles. Where possible, pedestrian movement patterns will be instituted that will minimize the potential for close contact between parishioners, including dedicated access ways for entrance and departure. Signage will be used in implementing these measures.
- Utilization of lower church/parish center facilities for additional Masses if the Church is full, and live video display of services will be continued in order to alleviate any overflow in attendance.
- Holy water and baptismal fonts will be emptied.
- Additional Mass times may be added at the pastor's discretion.
- Worship aids will be discouraged. Online worship aids will be encouraged. If paper worship aids are used, they should be limited to one page, and attendees

should be directed to take them with them after Mass. If worship aids are left in a pew, they must be collected and destroyed after each Mass.

- No paper bulletins will be distributed. Instead, parish bulletins/news will be posted to the parish website or emailed to parishioners.
- Non-essential gatherings will be suspended, including Children's Liturgy of the Word, post-Mass social gatherings/refreshments, etc.
- Communion will be distributed only via the Host; the Precious Blood will not be offered.
- A cantor will be permitted, but large choirs will not be used.
- Collection baskets will not be passed from person-to-person. Baskets with long handles will be allowed. Ushers taking the collection will wear masks and gloves. Large baskets may be placed at church exits for people to drop envelopes or donations. Ushers must immediately sanitize their hands after the collection.
- Offertory counters will wear gloves and masks, and practice social distancing.
- There will be no greeting of people after Mass.
- Tables and chairs in gathering areas will be put into storage so as not to invite people to use them.
- Baptismal pools or those with fonts that flow into a basin will be emptied after each use.

More detailed information regarding these policies may be found in the accompanying document, "Returning to Public Worship: Guidelines for Sacramental Celebrations."

By taking these steps, we are confident that we can assure our parishioners of their safety when attending church. For this reason, we are proposing that the Archdiocese begin its phased plan for reopening churches in tandem with the "NY Forward" Phase 2, which will coincide with the reopening of other professional and retail services.

The Archdiocese looks forward to working with state and local officials to realize its goal of bringing the Mass and sacraments back to the Catholic community responsibly and expeditiously.